STATE

Fourth California city joins Colorado boycott drive

Berkeley bans city-paid travel

By **Louis Aguilar**
Gazette Telegraph

Berkeley has become the fourth city in California to ban official travel to Colorado, and there is a chance that ban may be extended to all California state employees in reaction to this state's passage of Amendment 2.

Tuesday night, the Berkeley City Council unanimously voted to ban city-paid travel to Colorado to protest the amendment, which bans laws that protect gays, lesbians and bisexuals from discrimination based on their sexual orientation.

And a state assemblyman from Los Angeles hopes that within the next three weeks the California Legislature will debate a similar travel ban for all state employees. The measure was introduced about a month ago by Democrat Richard Polanco, who represents the 45th assembly district, said Polanco's spokesman, Chris Flammer. "We have good feelings about it succeeding," Flammer said. "Our indication is there will be some very vocal minority opposition, but that it will get the votes needed."

Flammer pointed out that California is one of eight states where sexual orientation is a basis for some protection under state civil rights laws.

Flammer said he didn't know what the economic impact of such a measure would be, but said it could be "more symbolic" than a real financial threat to Colorado.

With Berkeley's vote Tuesday night, four city councils in California now have gone on record as declaring Amendment 2 discriminatory. In addition, a gay and lesbian group in Oakland said recently it also will ask the leaders of that city to pass its own city-paid travel ban.

Berkeley joins Los Angeles, San Francisco and San Jose and seven cities in other states that have officially condemned Colorado because of the amendment. City councils in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, New York City, Philadelphia, Seattle and Austin, Texas, already have passed measures criticizing the amendment. Most of those cities have banned official travel to Colorado, and the Boston, Los Angeles and San Francisco city governments also have banned officials from doing business with some Colorado firms.

Representatives for the city of Berkeley and assemblyman Polanco said the multiple efforts within Colorado to overturn the amendment weren't enough to stop them from endorsing the boycott. Two Colorado lawmakers are working on ballot proposals to repeal Amendment 2, and Colorado Springs attorney Greg Walta is leading another effort for a ballot initiative that would essentially overturn it.

"We do applaud all of those efforts and don't wish to discourage that," said Marc Slavin, a spokesman for Berkeley Mayor Loni Hancock. "We felt the need to take a public stand, though. (Amendment 2) creates a second-class citizenship for a section of Americans. It's necessary, just as fellow Americans, to speak out against that discrimination."

In other Amendment 2 news, members of the Colorado Library Association will hold a special meeting Tuesday in Denver to talk about its board of director's earlier decision to not hold any conferences in any Colorado county where a majority of voters approved of the amendment. Voters in El Paso County, for example, supported the measure by a 2-to-1 margin.

Board member John Sheridan said that decision may be overturned.

CITY

Mark Reis/Gazette Telegraph

EDUCATION

Teacher winds up in court

Parents claim boy was harassed in forced apology

students heard that word," he said. "They were up and moving around and saying, 'Who said that? Who said that?' Those are fighting words, so to speak, for many students."

School officials said a handful of students identified Robert and Connie Thew's son as the one who had shouted the racial epithet, but the parents and a friend of the student who was with him at the time contend he was falsely

WHAT THEY SAID

"I truly believe that silence is as much an affirmation of bigotry as the words or action itself."